

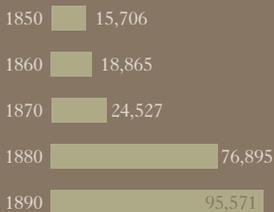
## SOCIETAL VALUES:

Belief in training and education; state responsibility for persons with disabilities.

## RESPONSES TO DISABILITY:

Establish training schools; build larger institutions; shift from education to custodial care.

Census results of persons with mental retardation: 1850-1890



During the economic troubles of 1857 and as a result of the Civil War, there were few jobs for students from the training schools. Competition for jobs was already high, with immigrants willing to work for low wages. Pupils who returned to their communities looking for work usually ended up in poorhouses or jails. At this time, there was a growing demand for services and less money available for training schools. Rapidly, training schools became institutions.



Training schools quickly became asylums, providing little more than custodial care for an increasing number of individuals with developmental disabilities. As enrollment increased, the commitment to education was largely abandoned. Pupils became

"inmates." The goal of educating pupils for life in the community was changed to training inmates to work inside the institution. Higher-functioning inmates were taught functional skills and used as laborers to reduce costs.

## THE COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION AND THE QUALITY OF SERVICES DECLINE WITH THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR INSTITUTIONAL PLACEMENT.

The superintendents of these institutions worked toward self-sufficiency, with institutions producing their own food and supplies when they could, thereby lessening their dependence on the state for support. Many

institutions had their own power plants, laundries, and farms. This was possible because of the low or no-cost labor of the inmates.

Superintendents believed that persons with different disabilities should be placed in different quarters. Therefore, an institution might have a separate building for persons with epilepsy called an "epileptic colony," another such building for "low-grades," and perhaps a "girls cottage" for women with various disabilities. The colony plan allowed institutions to admit a larger number of inmates, and relieve society of having to care for such persons in poor houses. Productive workers at the farm colony were often "paroled" to work as cheap labor on private farms. As enrollment of persons with more severe disabilities increased, the farm colonies grew to resemble the larger institutions.



As institutions grew in size, superintendents competed with one another to maintain the largest, most self-sufficient facilities. This led to institutions with over 6,000 people by the 1960s, at places like Willowbrook State School in New York.



## INVOLVEMENT BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: Students; objects of charity; inmates of institutions.

"Am I my brother's keeper?"  
— Genesis IV, 9

1852

A school for "feeble-minded youth" opens in Germantown, Pennsylvania.

1857

A school for "feeble-minded youth" opens in Columbus, Ohio.

1859

Charles Darwin publishes *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*.

1860s

Facility for the feeble-minded opens in Kentucky.

1863

Panic of 1857 creates pressure for facilities to keep students in training schools.

Population at the Pennsylvania Training School is 175.

1851

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet dies on September 10.

1855

A school for "feeble-minded youth" opens in Albany, New York.

1858

Isaac Kerlin publishes *The Mind Unveiled; or, A Brief History of Twenty-two Imbecile Children*.

1860

The Braille system is introduced to America and is taught with some success at the St. Louis School for the Blind.

1861

The American Civil War (1861 - 1865) brings 30,000 amputations in the Union Army alone.

1865

New York adopts the "Willard Plan" which includes separate facilities for chronic cases in an attempt to reduce costs.